

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Composite articles are prepared by a spray up operation. In a first step, a gel coat is applied onto a mold surface which has been optionally pretreated with a mold release coating. Next, a barrier coat is applied over the gel coat in the mold and thereafter a laminate formula is applied over the barrier coat. The laminate contains from 20-60% by weight reinforcing fibers. In a preferred embodiment, the multilayer composite has a thickness of about 15 mm or less, and is useful as an automobile body panel. The gel coat contains a curable polyester polyurethane acrylate resin, and the composite article has a surface that has high gloss and color retention after prolonged exposure to ultraviolet radiation. The laminate preferably comprises a low shrink, low density glass fiber filled polyester resin. In a preferred embodiment, the paste of the laminate contains a dicyclopentadiene unsaturated polyester resin, polymeric hollow microspheres, and an initiator capable of initiating curing at room temperature or at temperature of 50°C or less.